



U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release: June 13, 2011

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UPDATED INFORMATION:

No changes to the Missouri River long-term stage forecast have been made since the last press release. The current forecast for stages at the Blair gage are 32 to 34 feet based on modeled normal and above average precipitation and a release of 150,000 cfs from Gavins Point Dam. Current stage at Blair at 07:15 on June 13, 2011 is 31.4 feet. This means the river will continue to rise another 0.6 to 2.6 feet from the current stage.

Original release from June 9, 2011 (Highlight added)

Corps announces higher than expected flood crest stage on Missouri River at Blair, Neb.

Omaha, Neb. – The Corps of Engineers announced today that flood crest stages on the Missouri River at Blair, Neb. will exceed levels projected earlier by approximately 2 feet. This change does not affect the forecasted flow rate at Blair or any other Missouri River stream gage.

Missouri River forecasted flow rates at locations downstream from Gavins Point Dam are based on releases from Gavins Point Dam of 150,000 cubic feet per second (cfs) combined with tributary inflows based on normal precipitation.

Forecasted flow rates at downstream locations are converted to stage at stream gage locations using a relationship between stage and flow. During this flood event, the U.S. Geological survey (USGS) has been making weekly field measurements of flow rates at most stream gages on the Missouri River to verify the accuracy of the stage-flow relationships.

The Blair stream gage is operated as a stage-only stream gage, and flow measurements are normally not made at this location. Forecasted flood crest levels were based upon a stage-flow relationship that was estimated by averaging of flows between the Omaha and Decatur stream gages, which are on the weekly USGS measurement schedule.

Observed stage values at the Blair stream gage this week indicated that peak stage values would exceed earlier projections. Adjustments to the stage-flow relationship at the gage have been made, resulting in an increase of 2 feet in the forecasted long term crest at Blair.

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The current long term crest forecast at Blair is for a stage of 32 to 34 feet. The previous forecast was for stage of 30 to 32 feet.

Adjustments to stream gages, especially stage-only gages, are not unusual when dealing with large flood events. Many reaches of the river have not experienced flows this high since the dams were constructed. Therefore, the relationship between flow and stage can vary. The USGS has been asked to begin performing flow measurements on the Missouri River at Blair to improve the accuracy of the stage-flow relationship at that location.

The Blair stream gage was not used to calibrate the models the Corps of Engineers used to develop flood inundation maps. Therefore, this change does not affect the extent of flooding or depth of flooding on the inundation maps shown on the Corps of Engineers website.

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